

Transcription Lesson 7: Promotion or communication

Promotions refer to those communications (also called the marketing-communications mix) that marketers use to interact with consumers in various countries. They include advertising; direct and database marketing; online and social media marketing; sales promotions; event marketing, experiences and sponsorships; publicity and public relations (PR); personal selling; word of mouth; and mobile marketing. Within each communications tool, there are different media types or platforms such as TV, radio, websites, social media, and so on.

At the global marketing level, a company trying to speak with one voice is faced with many challenges when creating a worldwide marketing plan. Unless a company holds the same position against its competition in all markets (market leader, low cost, etc.), it is impossible to launch identical marketing plans worldwide. Thus, global companies must be nimble enough to adapt to changing local market trends, tastes, and needs.

For global advertisers, there are four potentially competing business objectives that must be balanced when developing worldwide advertising: building a brand while speaking with one voice, developing economies of scale in the creative process, maximising local effectiveness of advertisements, and increasing the company's speed of implementation. Global marketers can use the following approaches when executing global promotional programs: exporting executions, producing local executions, and importing ideas that travel.

To successfully implement these approaches, brands must ensure their promotional campaigns take into how consumer behaviour is shaped by internal conditions (for example, demographics, knowledge, attitude, beliefs) and external influences (for example, culture, ethnicity, family, lifestyle) in local markets.

Language – The importance of language differences is extremely crucial in global marketing, as there are almost 3,000 languages in the world. Language differences have caused many problems for marketers in designing advertising campaigns and product labels. Language becomes even more significant if a country's population speaks several languages.

Colours – Colours also have different meanings in different cultures. For example, in Egypt, the country's national colour of green is considered unacceptable for packaging because religious leaders once wore it. In Japan, black and white are colours of mourning and should not be used on a product's package. Similarly, purple is unacceptable in Hispanic nations because it is associated with death.

Values – An individual's values arise from his or her moral or religious beliefs and are learned through experiences. For example, Americans place a very high value on

References: Nel, JJ. 2017. Marketing in the music industry: Integrated marketing communications for South African musicians in the 21st century. University of South Africa. [Online], Available: <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/24471> [16 July 2019]; Peng, MW & Meyer, KE. 2019. *International business*. 3rd ed. Andover, United Kingdom: Cengage Learning.

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material well-being and are much more likely to purchase status symbols than people in India. In India, the Hindu religion forbids the consumption of beef.

Business norms – The norms of conducting business also vary from one country to the next. In France, wholesalers do not like to promote products. They are mainly interested in supplying retailers with the products they need.

Religious beliefs – A person's religious beliefs can affect shopping patterns and products purchased in addition to his or her values. In the United States and other Christian nations, Christmas time is a major sales period. But for other religions, religious holidays do not serve as popular times for purchasing products.

There are many other factors, including a country's political or legal environment, monetary circumstances, and technological environment that can impact a brand's promotional mix. Companies have to be ready to quickly respond and adapt to these challenges as they evolve and fluctuate in the market of each country.

Not only must the MNE decide on ways it can standardise and localise its communications in its international markets to cater to these factors, but it must also consider how it will communicate across digital and non-digital formats.

The evolution of digital technology and the expanding ways in which consumers and brands connect and interact, enhance the organisation's exposure to global markets. For small businesses, eMarketing opens up access to potential customers around the world, all for much less the cost than traditional advertising. The Internet's accessibility and low barrier to entry enable anyone with an Internet connection to book a flight, test drive a service, or purchase a product with just a few clicks of a mouse. Moreover, the perpetual nature of the Internet makes business occur 24 hours per day, seven days per week, 52 weeks per year. By speeding the time between the delivery of marketing communications and the gathering of consumer responses, the length of the consumer buying cycle is reduced and the volume of lead generation is increased.

However, one of the key aims of any marketing communications plan is to bring across a strong and consistent brand message to raise awareness of the organisation. Word of mouth happens on different continents. Ensuring that this message remains clear when it is interpreted by a variety of platforms, media, cultures and countries is virtually impossible. That is why it is quite difficult and costly to maintain control over the communications element of the marketing mix, especially in the global space. Luckily for global companies, web monitoring and tracking tools have become increasingly sophisticated and offer insights into consumer behaviour both online and offline. The nature of the Internet is such that users tend to organise themselves into far more focused groupings and in greater concentrations than in offline settings. For example, social networking websites and personalisation features

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can offer valuable information for global marketers looking to access hard-to-reach and overseas markets.

Market research, discussed at the beginning of this learning outcome, is essential to determining the success of promotional tactics in any country or region. Once brands discover what works (and what does not) in their promotional mix, those ideas can be imported by any other market. Likewise, companies can use this intelligence to modify various elements in their promotional mix that are receiving minimal or unfavourable response from global audiences.

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